GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4858
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2001
LABOUR EMPLOYMENT
HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether agriculture is a major industry in our country wherein maximum number of labour is engaged;

(b) whether three-fourth of farmers engaged in this sector are small and marginal farmers who can create maximum opportunities for employment for labourers by adopting new labour intensive agriculture technique;

(c) if so, whether the Government have taken concrete steps for making investment in new labour intensive agriculture technology for providing new and additional avenues of labour employment in agriculture sector;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor alongwith the total percentage of labourers who earn their livelihood from agriculture sector?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) to (e): As per Population Census 1991, cultivators and agricultural labourers constitute 35.2% and 23.8% respectively of total workforce. As per the Agricultural Census 1990-91, 59.4% of the total operational holdings were marginal (below one hectare) and 18.8% of operational holdings were small (between 1 to 2 ha.). The absorption of labour in agriculture depends upon the level of adoption of technology by the farmers. However, the thrust of the Indian Agricultural Policy is to increase the production and productivity through various methods including intensive cultivation, which have positive impact on employment generation. Encouragement of agro-based industries and development of agricultural infrastructure being taken up by the Government in rural areas also contribute to employment generation. In addition, the Government is implementing several self and wage-employment programmes/schemes such as Employment Assurance Scheme, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and Indira Awaas Yojana which directly lead to creation of gainful employment for the rural poor including small and marginal farmers.